

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP, IC

SUBJECT: SISCO VISIT

FOR AMBASSADOR IRVING FROM DJEREJIAN

1. FOR YOUR COMMENTS THERE FOLLOWS TEXT OF SUGGESTED REMARKS TO BE MADE BY MR. SISCO AT THE DINNER GIVEN FOR HIM AND ADMIRAL HOLLOWAY BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON DECEMBER 9.

2. QUOTE: MR. PRIME MINISTER, MR. FOREIGN MINISTER, DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF THE CABINET, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

TO MANY PEOPLE IN MY COUNTRY WHO HAVE NOT HAD THE PRIVILEGE, AS I HAVE HAD, TO VISIT YOUR COUNTRY, THE NAME OF ICELAND CONJURES UP THE PICTURE OF A LAND OF GLACIERS AND ICE AND SNOW. THIS GROUP OF COURSE DOES NOT INCLUDE THE MANY AMERICANS WHO HAVE HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO LIVE IN YOUR COUNTRY AND PARTAKE OF YOUR HOSPITALITY, NOR DOES IT INCLUDE THE INCREASING NUMBER OF MY COUNTRYMEN WHO COME TO SEE THE BEAUTIES OF THIS UNIQUE LAND. AND IT MOST CERTAINLY DOES NOT INCLUDE MY WIFE JEAN AND MYSELF OR

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ADMIRAL AND MRS. HOLLOWAY.

YES, YOU DO HAVE GLACIERS AND ICE AND SNOW--THEY PROVIDE
THE PURE WATER AND THE CLEAN AIR THAT WE HAVE BEEN

ENJOYING TODAY--AND THEY ARE THE ANSWER TO A SKIER'S
DREAM, IF WE ONLY HAD THE TIME: BUT THERE IS SO MUCH MORE
THAT WE HAVE FOUND IN ICELAND IN JUST THIS ONE SHORT DAY:
A WARM AND ABUNDANT HOSPITALITY WHICH FINDS ITS FINEST
EXPRESSION IN THE SUPERB DINNER WHICH WE HAVE JUST SHARED
IN THIS EXQUISITELY FURNISHED CLASSIC BUILDING. WE HAVE
HAD GLIMPSES OF THE AWESOME BEAUTY OF ICELAND'S COUNTRY-
SIDE, WHICH, EVEN AT THIS TIME OF YEAR WHEN WINTER EVERY-
WHERE GRIPS OUR COUNTRIES, SHOWS FORTH THE SPLENDORS AND
MAJESTY OF VOLCANOES, RUSHING RIVERS, CLOUD-SWEPT SKIES
AND FAR-FLUNG HORIZONS. AT LEAST IN ME AND IN MY WIFE
THERE IS BORN TODAY THE STRONG DESIRE TO RETURN AND
EXPLORE FURTHER THESE WONDERS.

THIS DAY HAS BEEN AN EXCITING AND A FULL ONE. WE HAVE ALL
BEEN INTELLECTUALLY STIMULATED BY OUR CONVERSATIONS WITH
YOU, THE LEADERS OF THIS JUSTLY PROUD NATION. WE HAVE ALL
BEEN DEEPLY MOVED BY THE FEELING OF KINSHIP AND FRIENDSHIP
WITH WHICH YOU HAVE SURROUNDED US. WE HAVE ALL BEEN
PLACED HOPELESSLY IN YOUR DEBT BY THE MUNIFICENCE OF YOUR
HOSPITALITY. WE HAD VERY MUCH EXPECTED THAT WE WOULD
ENJOY OUR VISIT TO ICELAND, BUT WHAT WE HAVE SO FAR
EXPERIENCED HAS GREATLY EXCEEDED ANYTHING WE COULD HAVE
IMAGINED.

AS I SAID THIS AFTERNOON TO THE DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF
THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE ALTHING, COMING TO
REYKJAVIK IS FOR US A LITTLE LIKE COMING HOME TO ONE OF
THE HEARTHS OF THE NORTH ATLANTIC FAMILY.

IT IS OUR TASK, AS REPRESENTATIVES OF NATIONS WHERE THE
TRADITIONS AND IDEALS OF DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM ARE
NURTURED EACH DAY, TO SEE TO IT THAT THE PROBLEMS THAT
LIE AHEAD DO NOT ENDANGER THESE TRADITIONS AND IDEALS.

BUT AMERICANS CANNOT WITH ANY JUSTICE TELL YOU, THE
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INDEPENDENT AND PROUD PEOPLE OF ICELAND, ANYTHING ABOUT
EITHER DEMOCRACY OR FREEDOM. IT WAS THE PEOPLE OF ICELAND,
A HUNDRED YEARS BEFORE ANY PERSON FROM THE EAST EVEN
TOUCHED AMERICAN SHORES, WHO ESTABLISHED A PARLIAMENT
WHOSE AIM WAS TO GIVE THE PEOPLE A VOICE IN THEIR OWN
AFFAIRS. THAT PARLIAMENT STILL EXISTS, AND IT WAS AN
HONOR TO BE ABLE TO VISIT IT TODAY IN ITS MODERN SETTING.
HOW FASCINATING IT WOULD BE TO BE ABLE TO TRAVEL BACK IN

TIME AND SEE THE STURDY ICELANDIC CHIEFTAINS OF OLD AS
THEY SAT IN COUNCIL AT THINGVELLIR (PRONOUNCED THING-VET-
LIR)--THESE WERE MEN WHO LEFT THEIR HOMELAND ACROSS AN
ILL-CHARTED SEA JUST IN ORDER TO FIND A NEW FREEDOM.

THESE EARLY NORSEMEN STROVE FOR THE FREEDOM ;HE; :STAB-
LISHED IN THEIR NEW LAND. THEIR DESCENDENTS DEFENDED
THIS FREEDOM TO THE LIMIT OF THEIR RESOURCES. THE
ICELANDIC MEN AND WOMEN HERE AT THIS TABLE TONIGHT HAVE,
IN THEIR LIFETIME, SEEN THE COMPLETION OF THE RETURN OF
THAT FREEDOM TO THEIR COUNTRY.

ICELAND IS A SMALL LAND GEOGRAPHICALLY, BUT ITS COURAGEOUS
HISTORY CAN POINT THE WAY FOR THE REST OF US IN THE WEST--
ESPECIALLY WE AMERICANS WHO ENTERED THE STAGE SO LONG
AFTER THE ICELANDERS PREPARED THE WAY FOR US, BY THEIR
DEMOCRATIC EXAMPLE AND BY THEIR DISCOVERY OF OUR CON-
TINENT.

LET US ALL RENEW OUR COMMON COMMITMENT TO THE THINGS WE
HOLD DEAR AND GO FORWARD WITH MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AND
TRUST TO PRESERVE AND PROTECT THEM.

I NOW A PROPOSE A TOAST TO ICELAND AND TO OUR GRACIOUS
HOST AND HOSTESS FOR THIS UNFORGETTABLE EVENING. I
INVITE YOU TO RAISE YOUR GLASS WITH ME AS WE SAY THAT
FINE WORD FROM ICELANDIC TRADITION--SKAL (PRONOUNCED
SKOWL). END QUOTE. INGERSOLL

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